



Mernda Hills Christian College

Food Policy

Document Control

Version	Approved By	Approval Date	Review Date	Modifications
0	College Council	October 2021	August 2025	
1	College Exec	December 2025	December 2029	Change to birthday food and camp provisions

FOOD POLICY

Rationale

Dietary habits are formed when an individual is still young and generally during their formative schooling years. Therefore, it is important to provide opportunities and encouragement for the best dietary choices to be made by our students and their families, most of whom will not have been exposed to the Adventist Health Message.

Implementation

General

1. This policy is based upon Biblical principles of health and the specifics of the Adventist Health Message.
2. Healthy nutrition involves not only the use of healthy foods but also the avoidance of unhealthy foods.
3. All food provided by Mernda Hills Christian College and associated to Mernda Hills Christian College will be wholly vegetarian.
4. Food that is used as a fundraising option should be done so within the boundaries of this policy. See Fundraising Policy for more details.
5. When opportunities arise students should be exposed to the principles of healthy dietary and lifestyle choices.
6. The Primary school has a "Fruit and Veg Only" Rule for recess time. This is to discourage students (and parents) from developing bad health habits.
7. Food bought off campus by staff, during normal school hours, should not be shared with students without notification to parents and permission from the Head of School.
8. All applications for class parties, fundraising events or other occasions including the provision of food items are to be approved by the Executive Leadership Team and placed on the calendar.

Student Birthdays

1. We recognise that children often like to celebrate their birthday with their peers. We ask that you take note of the following policy for these celebrations:
 - a. Food supplied needs to be food that does not require cutting up - for example; cupcakes, muffins, donuts or cookies.
 - b. Please do not bring lolly or gift bags
 - c. All requirements such as napkins and plates need to be supplied by parents
2. Please be mindful that there may be students in your child's class with allergies
3. Please communicate in advance with your child's classroom or homeroom teacher if you are planning to bring in birthday food.

Canteen

1. The canteen will operate within the boundaries of this policy and will offer a range of healthy food for students and staff.
2. Items considered to be unhealthy, such as confectionery and sugary drinks will not be served at the canteen.

Excursions, Incursions and Camps

1. When meals are provided as part of a College-related activity (on or off campus), the principles of this policy will be followed. All meals provided by the College (or agent of the College) will be vegetarian and healthy.
2. Camp exception: the College recognises that the energy requirements of active children during camp activities are high. For many families, vegetarian food is less familiar, and we wish to ensure that all students are able to get enough nutrition from provided meals during these activities.

- a. With this in mind, the College is willing to make an exception to the other requirements of the Food Policy to allow a meat option, in addition to vegetarian meal options during some meals of College camps.
 - b. This meat option provided will be fish, chicken, beef or lamb.
 - c. Any students requiring meals or food items that are in breach of this policy must provide a relevant medical certificate and dietary plan approved by a doctor, and submitted to the relevant head of school.
3. When food will not be provided by the College (or agent of the College) students should be encouraged to bring their own prepared meals.
4. Students bringing their own food on excursions/camps should be made aware of the following restrictions:
 - a. No beverages but juice or water (water preferred)
 - b. No confectionery (chocolate, lollies, gum, etc.)
 - c. Nothing that will spoil quickly
5. When students are expected to purchase their own meals off-campus some freedom will be permitted. However, students will not be permitted to consume certain items during a College program. Primary and junior secondary students may not purchase any drink that contains caffeine.
Items that are not allowed include:
 - a. Highly caffeinated drinks, such as energy drinks (Red Bull®, V®, etc.)
 - b. Alcoholic beverages, even if the student is over 18 years of age
6. When students are expected to purchase their own meals off-campus they should be encouraged, but not required, to choose healthy options.
7. Any food or drink purchased off-campus is to be consumed before entering the return bus and/or returned to school.
8. When stopping for a meal a healthy alternative should be sought. Only if there is no healthy alternative can the bus stop at a less desirable option.
9. The standard protocol following excursions is that food is not to be used as a reward.
10. Food required during incursions should be sourced from the College canteen if possible. If not, adherence to this policy is expected.

The Curriculum

1. Any food preparation related to the curriculum will be arranged within the boundaries of this policy.
2. Where the curriculum requires the use of animal products the leadership team will need to be consulted and any foods prepared should be clean according to Levitical standards.
3. Within the limits of the curriculum Food Technology and Hospitality classes will focus on healthy cooking and health food principles.

Functions

1. When the College has functions involving food service, the options will be consistent with this policy.
2. College events for staff will generally follow these policy requirements, especially where food is provided for staff.
3. Alcoholic beverages are not an accepted part of College staff functions.
4. Year 12 Formal exception - fish, chicken, beef or lamb may also be available as options at the Year 12 Formal event to honour student preference at this final event.